

1971

# A Study Comparing Fraternity and Non-Fraternity Freshmen at Louisiana State University.

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71-20,578

BRASHER, James Jackson, 1930-

A STUDY COMPARING FRATERNITY AND NON-FRATERNITY  
FRESHMEN AT LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural  
and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1971  
Education, guidance and counseling

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

A STUDY COMPARING  
FRATERNITY AND NON-FRATERNITY FRESHMEN  
AT LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Education

by  
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January, 1971

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the guidance given to him by his committee during the period of this study. He is deeply indebted to his major professor, Dr. Robert C. Von Brock for his encouragement, understanding and assistance. Appreciation is also expressed to Dr. Waldo W. Braden, Dr. J. Berton Gremillion, Dr. Russell E. Helmick, Dr. Robert E. May and Dr. Fred M. Smith who served as committee members.

The writer also wishes to thank Dr. Kenneth Koontz for his aid in the statistic design of the study. Appreciation is also expressed to Dean Arden O. French and the staff of the Office of the Dean of Men at Louisiana State University for their support and interest in the study. A special note of thanks is extended to Miss Pat Valenti for her valuable assistance.

Finally, tribute is paid to the members of the writer's family whose sacrifice, understanding, patience and encouragement made possible the completion of this study.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant differences between fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge during the fall semester of the 1969-70 academic year in the areas of academic ability, academic achievement, size of high-school graduating class and place of residence during the first semester of enrollment.

The study involved 1643 male, freshmen students. Of this number, 489 affiliated with a social fraternity and 1154 did not. Analysis of variance was used to test for statistical difference between the academic-ability levels of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. Chi-square was used to test the significance of the relationship that existed between size of high-school graduating class and tendency to join a fraternity and place of residence and tendency to join a fraternity. Multiple-classification analysis of covariance was used to test for possible significant difference between the academic-achievement levels of freshmen who were classified according to: (1) fraternity status, (2) size of high-school graduating class, and (3) place of residence. The covariate was academic ability level as determined by ACT scores.

The following conclusions were reached:

1. There was a significant difference between the academic-ability levels of fraternity freshmen and non-fraternity freshmen. Fraternity freshmen had significantly higher ACT composite scores and significantly higher scores on the English portion of the ACT test.

2. There was no significant difference between the academic-ability levels of freshmen who graduated from high schools with large graduating classes and freshmen who graduated from high schools with small graduating classes.

3. There was no significant difference between the academic-ability levels of freshmen who lived on the campus during the first semester and freshmen who lived off campus during the first semester.

4. On the average there was no significant difference between the first semester, academic achievement levels of fraternity freshmen and non-fraternity freshmen. After controlling for differences in ability levels, no significant differences were found in either grade-point averages for the first semester or in English grades earned during the first semester. However, when fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen were further partitioned according to place of residence, a significant interaction occurred. Non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus were found to achieve at a significantly lower level than non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus. In view of this interaction, it was found necessary to qualify this particular conclusion with the statement that the relative magnitude of any difference between the achievement levels of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen was also dependent upon the place-of-residence factor.

5. There was no significant difference between the first-semester achievement levels of freshmen students who graduated from high schools with large graduating classes and freshmen students who graduated from high schools with small graduating classes. No significant differences were found in either grade-point averages for the first semester or in English grades earned during the first semester.

6. On the average there was no significant difference between the first semester, academic-achievement levels of freshmen who lived off campus and freshmen who lived on campus. No significant differences were found in either grade point averages for the first semester or in English grades earned during the first semester. However, when off-campus freshmen and on-campus freshmen were further partitioned according to fraternity status, a significant interaction occurred. Non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus were found to achieve at a significantly lower level than non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus. In view of this interaction, it was found necessary to qualify this particular conclusion with the statement that the relative magnitude of any difference between the achievement levels of off-campus and on-campus freshmen was also dependent upon the fraternity status factor.

7. Freshmen who graduated from high schools with large graduating classes were more likely to join fraternities than were students who graduated from high schools with smaller graduating classes.

8. Freshmen who lived on campus were more likely to join fraternities than were freshmen who lived off campus. Freshmen who lived off campus were found to be under-represented in fraternities.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Chapter 1 is to explore briefly the history of the American college fraternity movement, to state the problem which forms the central purpose of the study, to discuss the importance of the study and to present the general organization of the study.

### BACKGROUND

Historians seem to be in general agreement that the prototype of the American college social fraternity was founded by students who were dissatisfied with the curriculum which was being offered by American colleges of the late eighteenth century. This dissatisfaction lead to the formation of various types of debating and literary societies which gave students an opportunity to experiment with what they had learned in the classroom and to explore fields of knowledge which were not a part of the formal curriculum.

Frederick Rudolph in the American College and University (1962) stated what he considered to be the three major steps in the development of social fraternities. He saw first the development of the literary society which was created by students in order to supplement the meager curriculum of the early colleges. In turn these literary societies gave way to the social fraternity whose primary purpose was to fill the vacuum left by the students' removal from his family and to offer an escape from the dreariness and regimen of the dormitory and from college life in general. Finally, shortly after the turn of the

century, it became obvious that American society was making a decided shift in philosophy; from an emphasis on preparations for the next world to an emphasis on success in the present world. As Rudolph says, fraternities became "Schools for success, institutions that prepared young men to take their place among men, not among angels." (1962:148)

Although the growth and development of fraternities on a particular campus was largely influenced by the educational, social and economic milieu of the institution, in general the development of social fraternities seems to have followed the pattern suggested by Rudolph.

Richard Fletcher identified several more recent phases of fraternity development. In Steps Along the Way (1964) he wrote that after World War I fraternities got into the hotel (rooming), cafe (board) and club (social activities) business. He further stated that fraternities which continued to base their existence exclusively on these areas would be in serious trouble because,

"Universities and colleges today are in the hotel and cafe business in a big way. They have to be, to perform their missions. Let's face it--fraternities can't compete with them in these areas, even if they are so misguided as to want to, and the Student Union and similar programs provide a social outlet which many students regard as adequate--so the institutions are geared for the Club business."

"The picture should be clear. The virtual monopoly fraternities once had on Club, Hotel and Cafe operations is gone, and today we (fraternities) face the problem of survival." (1964:54)

Many fraternity men agree with Fletcher's analysis of the current situation. Today the demand for housing, for feeding facilities and for social opportunities is being met rather adequately by University facilities and programs. As a result, fraternities

across the country, in addition to placing renewed emphasis on their original educational role, are beginning to search for new purposes and new reasons for being.

Because of a close relationship with social fraternities at Louisiana State University, this writer in concert with numerous fraternity members, has, from time to time, attempted to make some predictions as to the future role and purpose of fraternities on the campus. Drawing upon both the historical research of men like Fletcher (1964), Kershner (1968) and Rudolph (1963), and upon personal experience, periodic attempts have been made to chart a meaningful course that fraternities might use as a guideline for chapter operations.

However, in trying to predict the future role of fraternities and in trying to develop a new statement of purposes, it became increasingly clear that before any of this could be done an attempt needed to be made to determine the nature of fraternities as they exist at Louisiana State University today. That is, certain basic information concerning some of the characteristics of today's fraternity members needed to be collected and analyzed. It was apparent that too often fraternity members were being identified simply as good students, poor students, underachievers, or social climbers from the big city schools without reference to any concrete evidence to justify these statements.

The present study, then, was undertaken in an attempt to gain some specific information about a specific group of students at Louisiana State University. Its purpose was to shed some new light on the type of students who belonged to fraternities at Louisiana State University and how they compare to non-fraternity students.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem is to determine if there are significant differences between fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen at Louisiana State University during the fall semester of the 1969-70 academic year in the areas of academic ability, success in college, high-school environment and parental influence on fraternity affiliation.

Based on the problem as stated, several questions were posed for examination.

1. Was there a significant difference between the ACT composite scores of freshmen who joined fraternities and freshmen who did not?

2. Was there a significant difference between the ACT English scores of freshmen who joined fraternities and freshmen who did not?

3. Did freshmen who came from high schools with large graduating classes have more of a tendency to join fraternities than did freshmen who came from high schools with small graduating classes?

4. Did freshmen who lived on campus have more of a tendency to join fraternities than did freshmen who lived at home?

5. Was there a significant difference in the grade-point average at the end of the first semester between freshmen who joined a fraternity and those who did not join a fraternity?

6. Was there a significant difference in the grade-point average at the end of the first semester between fraternity freshmen who lived at home and fraternity freshmen who lived on campus and non-fraternity freshmen who lived at home and non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus?

7. Was there a significant difference in the grade-point average at the end of the first semester between fraternity freshmen who came from high schools with large graduating classes and fraternity freshmen who came from high schools with small graduating classes and non-fraternity freshmen who came from high schools with large graduating classes and non-fraternity freshmen who came from high schools with small graduating classes?



8. Was there a significant difference in English grades earned at the end of the first semester between freshmen who joined a fraternity and freshmen who did not join a fraternity?

These questions will be found stated as null hypotheses on pages 33 and 34.

#### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Academic Ability - The American College Testing Program (ACT) scores, both the composite score and the English score, were used to indicate the potential for academic achievement. This potential is referred to as academic ability throughout the study.

Success in College - Grade-point average (GPA) at the end of the first semester was used to indicate the degree of success in college. English grades were also tabulated for each student since English was the single most frequently scheduled course taken by freshmen.

High School Environment - It was recognized that numerous factors constituted a student's high school environment. However, since one of the purposes of this study was to determine if a freshman was more inclined to join a fraternity if he had had previous experiences in associating with large groups of young people, it was decided to use the size of the high school graduating class as one index of high school environment.

Parental Influence - The place of residence while enrolled at LSU (in a dormitory on campus as opposed to at home with parents) was used to indicate whether parental proximity influenced the decision to join or to not join a fraternity.

## IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

During the past ten years of working with social fraternities at Louisiana State University it has become increasingly clear that social fraternities are rather deeply interwoven into the fabric of this institution. Varying levels of interest in social fraternities may be found off campus as well as on campus. Business men who sell merchandise to fraternities, alumni who have their names on mortgages, parents who pay their son's bills, university administrators who are held responsible for living conditions and of course students, both members and non-members, all have some type of an interest in fraternities. It is not surprising, then, that the question is frequently asked, "What is the future of fraternities at LSU?"

The purpose of this study is to raise and answer a number of questions. The answers to these questions should provide a foundation of accurate information from which extrapolations about the future and from which statements about the purposes of fraternities may eventually be made.

The major importance of this study lies in gaining an understanding of the type of men who join fraternities at Louisiana State University and what happens to them after they join. Specifically, it should give the student personnel worker information which he may use in the performance of his assigned responsibilities. If the study shows that superior students tend to stay out of fraternities, then a strong case may be made for a shift in fraternity membership selection procedures or for a re-evaluation of the goals of fraternities. If the results of the study indicate that fraternities are doing a poor job

in the area of scholarship, then there will be a clear reason to place renewed emphasis on scholastic program development.

If on the other hand the results of the study show that fraternities are performing acceptably in the scholastic area, then fraternities may use this information to offset some of the negative criticisms which they receive. In addition to this, parents may be more inclined to allow their sons to participate in fraternities if they can be shown that fraternities are not detrimental to academic efforts.

This study will also offer some information concerning the social make-up of fraternities. Fraternities on this particular campus have indicated that they have a desire to attract young men from diverse backgrounds so that each may benefit from this diversity. The results of this study may give some indication as to the truth of this assertion. If fraternity members do in fact come primarily from large high schools, then fraternities need to broaden their selection procedures.

Recently there has been considerable discussion of the changing nature of Louisiana State University from a primarily "resident" school to a primarily "commuter" school. If this trend continues, and if the results of this study indicate that students who live at home tend not to join a fraternity, then fraternities may have to shift their programs more toward the commuting student.

The importance, then, of this study lies primarily in the information it will provide to the student personnel worker as he seeks to offer constructive guidance to these groups. The results will also be of importance to students who are trying to decide whether or not to join a fraternity, to parents who have misgivings about the value of

fraternities, to the University which has a vested interest in fraternities, and to the fraternities themselves.

In addition to this, the study will offer answers to a number of questions which have been raised concerning specific characteristics of freshmen in general and fraternity freshmen in particular.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 was designed to give a general background for the problem under investigation. It includes a statement of the problem, major questions to be answered and some delimitations.

Chapter 2 presents a summary of the related literature. The review is divided into three sections; a review of articles from the popular press, a review of articles from fraternity publications and a review of professional journals and dissertations.

Chapter 3 deals with the general plan and design of the study. It is divided according to the setting and population of the study, the collection of data, and the treatment of the data.

In Chapter 4 the data compiled in this investigation are presented and analyzed. The first section of this chapter deals with academic ability as measured by ACT scores. The second section deals with the freshmen students' background in terms of size of high-school graduating class and place of residence during the first semester. The third section is concerned with academic achievement as measured by grade-point averages and the final section is concerned with academic achievement as measured by first semester English grades.

Chapter 5 is a summary of the study.

## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of Chapter II is to present a review of relevant studies and comments which have been made about the characteristics of fraternities and fraternity members.

### BACKGROUND

This study concerned itself with 1643 male students who were freshmen at the Baton Rouge campus of Louisiana State University during the fall semester of the 1969-70 academic year. The study divided these freshmen into two sub-groups: (1) those who affiliated with a social fraternity and (2) those who did not. The study then raised several questions about these two groups: Was there a difference in academic ability as measured by a pre-test situation? Was there a difference in academic success? Was there a difference in high school environment and was there a difference between the two groups according to place of residence?

The literature which was reviewed and found relevant to this study was divided into three general types or sources: (1) the popular press; (2) fraternity publications; and (3) research studies and professional journals.

The popular press included magazines (Life, Look, Esquire, U. S. News & World Report), newspapers (both big city dailies and campus newspapers) and books. Fraternity publications included fraternity magazines (usually quarterlies), fraternity pledge manuals and books containing the history of various national fraternities.

Research studies and professional journals included dissertations and journals such as The Personnel and Guidance Journal, Journal of College Student Personnel and Journal of Educational Measurement.

Each of the three major sources of information mentioned above tended to exhibit a rather consistent and predictable point of view toward fraternities. The popular press tended in general to be critical of fraternities. On the other hand, fraternity publications were found to be rather strongly pro fraternity in tone. The research papers and professional journals seemed to exhibit a more middle-of-the-road approach; sometimes offering support to anti-fraternity arguments and sometimes providing support for the pro-fraternity arguments.

#### THE POPULAR PRESS

Among the public in general there appeared to be two rather widely held attitudes toward fraternities in the 1960's. One was that they were generally anti-intellectual (i.e. not really interested in scholastic achievement) and the other was that they were declining as centers of campus power and prestige. The popular press tended to reflect these attitudes.

On the subject of fraternity scholarship, two articles in particular reflected the idea that fraternities were not living up to their intellectual commitments.

In 1963, Look Magazine printed a special feature on college fraternities entitled "Will Fraternities Survive?" (Poppy, 1963) At one point in the article Stanford psychologist Nevit Sanford was quoted. Look said, "Sanford draws a parallel between 'the clash of cultures in this country' and another clash: 19th-century fraternity versus 20th-

century student.' In the South...people are accepted unconditionally; the underachiever is not rejected; family solidarity, friendship, fraternity still matter a great deal--often more than success or status.' But in the North, 'people...are evaluated in terms of what they can be exchanged for. Nowhere is the old Yankee spirit more persistent than in Northern colleges and universities...where grades have for the students the function of money in the larger society...What the Southern states are to the whole body politic, the fraternities are to the colleges and universities." (Poppy, 1963:62)

The theme of this article and of Sanford's comments were frequently repeated in other articles that were critical of fraternities. This idea that fraternities were no longer relevant to the college, either academically or socially, was a frequently stated criticism.

In 1965 The Wall Street Journal (Klein, 1965) headlined a story with, "Beleaguered Greeks"; Fraternity Role Shrinks on Many U. S. Campuses as Criticisms Mount." The article quoted a faculty story from Amherst College which said in part that "the Greek groups there had exhausted their possibilities for reform and stood directly in the way of exciting new possibilities for student life."

"In its report the (Amherst) committee said the fraternities are viewed by some of their members 'as a happy refuge from the intellectual, civil and moral obligations of the college and general society.'"

On the subject of the fraternity's position of influence on campus, U. S. News & World Report reported in an article entitled, "Changes in Today's College Student" (1964), "On fraternities, from college after college, you get such reports as these:

'Fraternities are no longer power centers.'

'Membership in our fraternities has been declining.'

'Fraternities are generally weakening all over the East.'

In 1965, LaPradd (1965) conducted a study entitled, "College Male Fraternities in Controversy, 1950-1965, as Reported in American Magazines." After gathering his data he classified it as, "favorable," "unfavorable," or "neutral," in attitude toward fraternities. He found that, "twenty-three percent were neutral and forty percent were unfavorable. It is evident from these figures that the fraternity controversy has been portrayed to the magazine reading public in a manner largely unfavorable to fraternities." (1965:98)

At the campus level, fraternities usually faced additional criticism from the campus press. Aside from an occasional letter to the editor by a fraternity member attempting to defend the fraternity system, the vast majority of editorial comment when it concerned social fraternities was of a negative or highly critical nature.

On the Louisiana State University Campus in Baton Rouge the campus newspaper printed seven editorials concerning fraternities during the 1969-70 academic year. All seven of them were critical of some phase of social fraternity operations.

As was stated at the beginning of this chapter, the popular press, in general, tends to be critical of social fraternities. There are notable exceptions, of course, as when a story appears concerning the laudable efforts of a chapter or a group of fraternity members to assist in a civic project or help hold the dikes around a rampaging river. But in the main, the reader of the popular press received the general impression that social fraternities were an anachronism on the



contemporary college campus, were largely anti-intellectual in nature, and were rather rapidly going the way of the Dodo bird and spats.

It should be further noted that comment on social fraternities in the popular press has declined noticeably during the past several years. The late 1950's and the early 1960's seem to have marked the high point of popular press interest in fraternities.

#### FRATERNITY PUBLICATIONS

In general, each national social fraternity has three major types of publications. They are the national fraternity magazine (usually a quarterly), the pledge manual and a history of the fraternity. These publications vary widely both in quality of production and in quality of editorial content.

To a large degree the national magazines serve much the same function as a corporation house organ. They feature pictures and stories about alumni and undergraduates and remind the reader that his particular fraternity is very much alive and growing.

The relevance of the national magazines to this particular study lies primarily in the fact that it reveals a great deal about the current attitude of fraternities about the role of fraternities on the college campus. After reading the national magazines for several years and after studying the pledge manuals it has become fairly clear that there are several basic concerns which most fraternities have in common. One is a concern for creditable chapter scholarship. Another is a concern for growth (both by increasing membership and by adding new chapters.) a third concern involves the image of the fraternity, and a fourth is a concern for the survival of the fraternity. Of these

four concerns the one which dealt with scholarship was considered to be directly related to this study.

The concern for creditable scholarship is evidenced through frequent printing of chapter scholarship rankings, through announcements of various scholarship awards made to chapters and to individual chapter members, through the printing of speeches made on the subject of scholarship and through the printing of articles detailing the various techniques used by certain chapters to raise their scholastic levels. In most instances scholarship is equated with grade-point averages but in several instances scholarship was broadened to include the development of stronger chapter libraries and the inauguration of a guest lecture series within the chapter.

The inference in all of these articles is clearly one that conveys the idea that scholarship is an important facet of the social fraternity and that much is being done to encourage and improve it.

In the pledge manuals, too, scholarship is found consistently at or near the top in any listing of fraternity priorities or purposes. From lengthy discussions of how to study (Pearson, 1961:72) to the simple statement, "if you didn't come to college for an education, we don't want you," (Vaughan, 1964:32) fraternity pledge manuals pay high allegiance to scholastic achievement.

Blackwell (1957) in his book Improvement of Fraternity Scholarship made the point that emphasis on scholarship is what made college fraternities different from other fraternal organizations. He said, "Indeed, to a large extent it is this common emphasis upon scholastic achievement that differentiates college fraternities from other fraternal organizations." (1957:3)

From a review of the national fraternity publications it appeared that while little or no specific research had been conducted (other than the tabulation of chapter rankings), the attitude was clearly present that scholarship was important to the national fraternity and consequently should be important to the individual fraternity member.

A rather wide divergence of opinion was seen between the popular press and fraternity publications.

#### RESEARCH STUDIES AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS

The literature which was examined in this section consisted primarily of the written reports of research done on a systematic basis or in a controlled situation. Most of the research was conducted by individuals who had some direct involvement in the field of student personnel work.

For purposes of organization, the research will be reviewed as it relates to each of the four basic areas of this study: (1) academic ability; (2) academic achievement; (3) high school environment and (4) place of residence.

##### Academic Ability

In 1954, Thompson (1954) conducted a study involving fraternity pledges from Indiana University and from DePauw University. His purpose was to investigate the factors which have a relationship to the success or failure of college fraternity pledges in meeting the requirements for initiation into active membership. Factors studied pertained to personal background, high-school data, college data and test scores. He attempted to ascertain the validity of these contributing factors.

Among other findings, he reported that, "The test scores on the orientation tests indicated that those with high scores were more apt to become eligible for fraternity initiation." (1954:154)

Crookston (1960) in a study of the academic performance of fraternity pledges at the University of Utah in 1956, used 112 matched samples to study the influence of fraternity membership on academic achievement. As an indication of academic ability he used a Predicted Grade-Point Average (PGPA) which was based upon high-school grades and entrance tests. Of the PGPA he said, "It can predict the performance of entering freshmen within a standard error of .57 grade points and has higher predictive validity when applied to larger groups."

(1960:19) Crookston's study was not designed to determine if there was a difference between the PGPA of pledges and non-pledges.

Nelson (1959), as a result of his study of fraternities and sororities at Virginia State College, was able to conclude that, "Greek letter social organizations attracted the academically stronger students." (1959:105) Nelson's study was based on the performance of four groups of fifty-five members each representing sororities, fraternities, independent women and independent men. Subjects were chosen on the basis of Snedecor's Table of Random Numbers. Tests used to determine the students' academic ability were The Otis Quick Scoring Test of Mental Ability, Gamma Form, The Iowa High School Content Examination, Form L, and the Nelson-Denny Reading Test.

In a study conducted at Indiana University from 1954 to 1958, Matson (1961) attempted to determine the academic potential and achievement of five different groups. He developed his groups according to their housing units, having three fraternity groups, one

residence hall group and one off-campus group. The three fraternity groups were further classified as to high, medium or low according to their local prestige. The students in the study (1,181 males) were placed into one of four academic potential levels on the basis of their high school records and orientation test scores. Group differences were tested by use of the chi-square technique in a simultaneous comparison of all five campus groups over all four of the academic potential levels.

Significant differences were found to exist in several respects between those student groups studied. Two of the conclusions are of interest to this study: (1) "The high prestige fraternities (Group I) had students of higher academic potential when the total group membership was compared with that of the other four groups." and (2) The middle prestige fraternities (Group II) and the residence hall group (Group IV) "were potentially superior academically to both the off-campus and low prestige fraternity groups over the first three of the four years studied." (1961:126)

Additional study of the relationship between student residence and academic ability was done by Prusok and Walsh (1964) in research conducted at the State University of Iowa in 1961. In reviewing the literature related to the problem of residence halls and academic achievement, Prusok and Walsh stated: "More than twenty different studies were found. Their results were quite inconsistent." (1964:180)

In this particular study, Prusok and Walsh asked the question, "Do fraternity pledges differ in academic achievement from freshmen electing other types of housing when scholastic ability is controlled?" (1964:180) For purposes of this study, scholastic ability was equated

with high-school grade-point average and ACT composite scores. Scholastic ability was statistically controlled within the groups by analysis of covariance and no data was presented as to the variation, if any, of the scholastic ability levels between the four types of housing groups.

Kaludis and Zatzkin in a study conducted at the University of Maryland in 1964 (1966) investigated the lack of numerical growth of the fraternity system at that University. Working with information contained on a locally prepared biographical inventory, twenty-one items were selected in the socio-economic field in order to determine if there were any group differences between the fraternity and non-fraternity groups. In addition to these twenty-one items, ACT scores were collected in an attempt to determine the academic ability levels of the two groups. Among other findings, Klaudis and Zatzkin reported that, "Although the two groups differed on the basis of socio-economic characteristics, they did not differ in academic ability as measured by the ACT..." (1966:284)

In 1966, Curris (1967) conducted a study at the University of Kentucky which was designed to measure the academic performance of freshmen pledges and to determine what relationships exist between academic achievement and aptitude, personality and peer influence variables. Ability level was based upon the ACT Composite score. Curris reported in his findings that, "No differences were found between these two groups [pledges and non-pledges] relative to ACT predicted grade averages..." (1967:108)

Each of the seven studies cited above made an attempt to determine the academic ability level of the groups involved in the

study. Four studies used some combination of orientation tests and high school performance records; one study used the ACT and high-school GPA; and two studies used only the ACT.

After utilizing these various methods to determine the academic ability levels of the groups involved, two studies concluded that there was no significant difference between the academic ability of the fraternity and non-fraternity groups; one study found that the academic ability levels of some fraternity chapters were superior to some non-fraternity groups; one study found that the academic ability of the fraternity group was superior to the non-fraternity group and three studies were not designed to show this relationship.

#### Academic Achievement

Crookston (1960) in his matched pair study of fraternity and non-fraternity students at the University of Utah found that, "The mean fraternity GPA was .23 grade points below the prediction, and the mean control group was .32 grade points below the mean prediction." (1960:20) He concluded that the difference obtained was not significant at the .05 level of confidence and therefore he accepted the null hypothesis, "that the first quarter academic performance of the fraternity freshman pledge does not differ significantly from the non-fraternity freshman." (1960:20)

Crookston also makes the following observation concerning fraternity and non-fraternity students:

However, in recent years those who work with fraternities have become aware that the fraternity student is quite like the typical university student...Examination of GPA's on the University of Utah campus from 1946 to 1959 shows that the fraternity average rarely varies more than one tenth of a grade point from that of the male undergraduate student body. If one looks at fraternity members as a whole on the contemporary

campus, it is the writer's opinion that there will be few socio-economic or intellectual differences between them and the student body from which they are selected. (1960:21)

Nelson (1959) studied fraternity and sorority members at Virginia State College from 1954 to 1958. His findings were somewhat different than were Crookston's. Nelson found that fraternity and sorority members were not only superior in academic ability but also performed better than independents in the various subject-matter areas studied. He concluded:

"1) The fraternal groups were quite successful in achieving their objective to encourage their members to participate in extra-curricular activities.

2) Comparable success was experienced by the fraternal groups in their efforts to promote good scholarship among their membership.

3) The scholastic averages of students did not suffer after joining a Greek letter social organization insofar as reference is to fraternal members as groups.

4) Greek letter social organizations attracted the academically stronger students." (1959:104-5)

A similar study was conducted by Willingham (1962) at Georgia Institute of Technology. Willingham compared fraternity members and independent students on various aspects of scholastic performance. His study considered attrition rates, freshmen grades and four-year grades. The results of his research allowed Willingham to draw the following two conclusions, "First, freshmen who pledge a fraternity are less likely to drop out of Georgia Tech during the first year; and second, the academic achievement of fraternity members is certainly as high if not slightly higher than that of independent students." (1962:31)



Willingham offered several possible explanations for the lower attrition rates and somewhat higher grades. He cited social ties, motivation to be initiated, inter-chapter scholastic competition and chapter test files as possible factors, but concluded, "While these results may be suggestive, they cannot be automatically generalized to other colleges." (1962:31)

In a study mentioned earlier, Prusok and Walsh (1964) stated that they had reviewed more than twenty different studies concerning the effect of residence halls on academic achievement and had found the results to be inconsistent. In setting up their study, Prusok and Walsh used groups from four types of residence halls: fraternity houses; residence halls; living at home and living off-campus. They hypothesized that, "There are no differences in adjusted grades among State University of Iowa freshman men living in the four most usual types of housing." (1964:181) They found that, "The results of the comparison of the four housing types indicated that no statistically significant differences exist among the mean adjusted first semester grade-point averages for entering freshman men in these types of housing." (1964:182)

In 1963, Wise (1963) conducted a study at the Pennsylvania State University in order to determine if fraternities influenced certain student attitudes, achievements and knowledge. Four groups were selected for the study: two fraternity groups, sophomores and seniors; two residence hall groups, sophomores and seniors. Each group consisted of seventy-five male students.

In contrast to the research of both Willingham and Prusok and Walsh, Wise found that, "the fraternity system...exerts a negative

influence upon students' academic average." (1963:121)

In the previously mentioned matched sample study of 341 fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen at the University of Maryland, Kaludis and Zatzkin (1966) found that, "The analysis of covariance computations yielded nonsignificant differences in first semester academic performance (GPA) with ACT held constant." (1966:283) They concluded that, "According to the results, fraternity pledging neither helped nor hindered first semester academic performance." (1966:284)

In the study which Curris (1967) conducted at the University of Kentucky, he reported that there was no significant difference between the first semester achievement of pledges and non-pledges. He further noted that, "Second semester grades of pledges were markedly lower than those recorded by non-pledges. The mean drop in second semester grades of pledges was (-.45), significant at the .001 level." (1967:52)

Rhodes (1969) conducted a study at The Pennsylvania State University which was designed to study selected factors related to the scholarship of undergraduate men living in fraternity houses. He concluded that, "Fraternities at the Pennsylvania State University exert negative influences on the academic achievement of their members /who live in the chapter house/ which are not similarly experienced by students who live in University residence halls." (1969:181)

It is noteworthy that both Wise (1963) and Rhodes (1969) conducted their studies at The Pennsylvania State University, and both concluded that fraternities exert a negative influence on the academic achievement of the chapter members.

In general the findings of these eight studies appeared to be somewhat inconclusive. Four studies indicated that there was no

difference between fraternity and non-fraternity achievement levels. Two studies found that non-fraternity members achieved at a higher level than did fraternity members. One study found that fraternity members achieved at a higher level and two studies indicated that there were no basic differences in achievement levels but qualified the results in a way that made them inconclusive.

In view of the fact that different techniques, sample populations and time periods were involved in the various studies, it was impossible to generalize about the findings. On the basis of this research, however, it appeared safe to conclude that fraternity achievement levels vary from campus to campus. As Willingham noted, "While these results may be suggestive, they cannot be automatically generalized to other colleges." (1962:31)

#### High School Environment

In a previously cited study, Thompson (1954) examined the various factors which affected eligibility for initiation. A portion of this study dealt with the collection and analysis of certain high school data pertaining to the groups involved in the study. Thompson made the following statements in regard to his findings and conclusions:

"2) Students who ranked toward the top of their high-school graduating classes were much more apt to be successful in meeting fraternity initiation requirements.

3) The more credits a student had earned in high-school English, mathematics, science, and Latin, the greater were his chances of being successful in meeting fraternity initiation requirements.

4) The higher the grades earned in high school, the better were the student's chances of meeting the requirements for initiation

for fraternity membership." (1954:153)

In 1963, Jackson and Winkler (1964) conducted a study at the University of North Dakota in an attempt to identify certain characteristics of students who chose to join fraternities and those who chose not to join. For purposes of the investigation four groups of 46 students were developed: male pledges, male independents, female pledges, female independents.

"The tests employed in the investigation were the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, Kuder Preference Record-Personal, Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, Study of Values, American College Test, and a biographical inventory constructed by the investigators." (1964:380)

Jackson and Winkler stated that, "The purpose of this investigation is to determine empirically whether differences exist between freshman pledges and independents in terms of social, personal, and intellectual characteristics." (1964:379)

The results of this investigation as they related to the high school data collected indicated, "...that male and female pledges more frequently engaged in extracurricular and social activities while in high school than did the future independents." (1964:381) Jackson and Winkler further concluded, "It appears, on the basis of this information, that students who pledge fraternities are those whose needs and behavior are socially oriented." (1964:381)

In a study done in 1964 at Indiana University, Wolf (1965) attempted to determine how various university-related groups perceived men's social fraternities at Indiana University in the light of their contributions to student fulfillment of university educational

objectives. In his findings, Wolf stated that, "There was no statistically significant difference in perception on the basis of sex, parents' occupation or education, type of high school attended, or parents' membership in a college fraternity or sorority.:" (1965:148)

Little evidence was found in the literature that would either support or reject the notion that there is a relationship between a student's decision to join a fraternity and the size of his high school.

### Place of Residence

In a previously cited study, Matson (1961) attempted to determine if there were significant differences between fraternity-house residents, dormitory residents and off-campus students in the areas of academic potential and academic achievement. Among other things he found that, "The low prestige fraternities and the off-campus group were equal with regard to over-all academic potential..." (1961:126) The study had previously shown that the low prestige fraternities and the off-campus group were significantly below the other three study groups in academic potential. In addition to this, Wolf (1965) found that, "The percentage of students who dropped out of school at each of the four potential levels showed that a much higher proportion of the students in the three fraternity groups remained in school as compared with the residence hall and off-campus groups." (1965:152) This latter finding was also supported by Willingham's conclusion that, "...freshmen who pledge a fraternity are less likely to drop out of Georgia Tech during the freshman year..." (1962:31)

Although the Kaludis and Zatzkin (1966) study at the University of Maryland was not designed to examine the relationship between place of residence and decision to join a fraternity, they did note in their

results that, "commuting students were under-represented in the Fraternity group." (1966:238) They further noted that, "the fact that commuters were not proportionally represented in the fraternity group suggested that the fraternities had not offered an adequate attraction for this group. It is the authors' opinion that fraternity facilities might be designed or adapted to serve commuting students. At the same time, the fraternity might become an important factor of identification with the institution for the commuting student." (1966:284)

Along these lines, Wolf (1965) noted in the final conclusion of his study of the fraternity as perceived by university-related groups that, "Since 76% of the students based their views of fraternities primarily on personal observations, it seemed clear that fraternities have an opportunity to change student perception by re-evaluating and re-designing the different activities and programs that project the fraternity image." (1965:148)

Other than the Kaludis and Zatzkin statement concerning the fact that commuter students were under-represented in the fraternity population, little evidence was found to support or reject the idea that students who live at home were influenced by this environment in a way that would tend to discourage them from joining a fraternity.

#### SUMMARY

From the review of the literature it appeared that rather large differences exist in fraternity operations, membership, goals and achievement from campus to campus and from one period of time to another. The literature did evidence a concern on the part of the

researchers that fraternities did need to more clearly state their goals and purposes and then develop plans and procedures whereby these goals could be achieved.

## Chapter 3

### PLAN AND DESIGN OF STUDY

The purpose of Chapter 3 is to explain the procedures used in the development of this study. The chapter is divided into three sections, each dealing with some phase of the study. The divisions are: (1) Setting and population of the study; (2) Collection of data; (3) Treatment of the Data.

### SETTING AND POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at the Baton Rouge campus of Louisiana State University during the fall semester of the 1969-70 academic year. It included only male students who were classified as new freshmen during that particular semester.

At the beginning of the fall semester a rush period was held by the campus social fraternities. The rush period was planned and controlled by the Interfraternity Council and involved each of the twenty-four national fraternity chapters represented on the campus. The rush period was divided into two periods: Phase A and Phase B.

Phase A consisted of ten, one-hour smokers and three, two-hour open house sessions scheduled during the first three days of the rush period. At that time those freshmen who were interested in fraternities visited the chapter houses and met the chapter members. Phase A rush was open to all students and did not require any type of recommendation or formal invitation. It was scheduled during (but not in conflict with)



the regular orientation days so that freshmen who were interested in fraternities did not have to arrive on campus earlier than other freshmen.

Phase B rush consisted of four three-hour parties which were scheduled over a period of two days. Attendance at Phase B rush was by invitation. The final bids, or invitations to join, were distributed on the first day of regular academic registration.

Approximately 1114 male students participated in the fall rush period. Of this number 716 chose to affiliate with a fraternity. Of this 716 approximately 600 were classified as new freshmen.

For purposes of this study, a freshman was considered to be a fraternity freshman if he maintained his affiliation for at least nine weeks. The total number of fraternity freshmen considered in this study was 489.

The size of the freshmen male class in the fall of 1969-70 was 2049. Of this number 406 were excluded from this study for one or more of the following reasons: (1) Student resigned during the semester; (2) he was an international student; (3) he did not have a complete set of ACT test scores; or, (4) other pertinent data were missing from his records.

#### COLLECTION OF DATA

Data used in this study were collected in the following manner. A master deck of all entering male freshmen was prepared on IBM cards by the Data Processing Office. Each card contained a name, student number (social security number), ACT composite score, ACT English score, grade-point average for the fall semester, and date of student entry.

Additional information concerning fraternity status, place of residence, size of high-school graduating class, semester English grade and fraternity chapter identification was collected from records on file in the Office of the Dean of Men and in the Junior Division Office. This information was key punched into the respective IBM cards. A copy of the IBM card layout appears in Appendix A.

The IBM 360 computer was used in the analysis. Data contained on the IBM cards were tabulated and recorded according to the requirements of the study.

#### TREATMENT OF DATA

Three statistical procedures were employed in the treatment of data for this study: (1) analysis of variance, (2) chi-square, and (3) multiple-classification analysis of covariance.

Analysis of variance was the statistical method used to test for a possible significant difference between the ability-level means of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. Items 1 and 2 on page 33 contain the formally stated hypotheses in regard to these possible differences.

Also involved in this analysis of variance were two additional factors of experimental interest to the study. They were size of high-school graduating class and place of residence during the first semester. The main effects and interaction effects of these two factors were examined along with the fraternity-status factor although no formal hypotheses were formulated concerning their relationship to freshmen ability levels.

The decision to include these two additional factors was based on the understanding that: (1) The F test would be made stronger if the possible effects of size of high-school graduating class and place of residence were removed, and (2) these two factors were to be incorporated in subsequent hypotheses of this study.

Chi-square was used to test the statistical significance of the difference that existed between the size of a freshman's high school graduating class and his tendency to join a fraternity. Chi-square was also used to test the statistical significance of the difference that existed between a freshman's place of residence and his tendency to join a fraternity.

The multiple-classification analysis of covariance was the statistical method used to test for a possible significant difference between the achievement levels of freshmen who were classified according to: (1) fraternity status, (2) size of high school graduating class, and (3) place of residence. The covariate was ability level as determined by the ACT scores.

Table 1 indicates the number of male, freshman students included in the various subclasses used in this study.

Table 1

Distribution of Class and Subclass Frequencies...N = 1643

Identification	Number
Fraternity Status	
Non-fraternity	1154
Fraternity	489
Size of High-School Class	
Fewer than 25	46
25-99	306
100-399	808
400 or more	483
Residence	
On Campus	1051
Off Campus	592
Place of Residence and Size of High-School Class	
On campus - fewer than 25	36
On campus - 25-99	217
On campus - 100-399	518
On campus - 400 or more	280
Off campus - fewer than 25	10
Off campus - 25-99	89
Off campus - 100-399	290
Off campus - 400 or more	203
Place of Residence and Fraternity Status	
On campus - non-fraternity	676
On campus - fraternity	375
Off campus - non-fraternity	478
Off campus - fraternity	114
Fraternity Status and Size of High School	
Non-fraternity - fewer than 25	34
Non-fraternity - 25-99	213
Non-fraternity - 100-399	595
Non-fraternity - 400 or more	312
Fraternity - fewer than 25	12
Fraternity - 25-99	93
Fraternity - 100-399	213
Fraternity - 400 or more	171

## Chapter 4

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to report and analyze the results of the investigation. Each of the eight questions posed in Chapter 1 was restated as a null hypothesis and was either accepted or rejected on the basis of the results of the statistical computations performed. These eight null hypotheses are:

1. There is no significant difference between the ACT composite scores of freshmen who join fraternities and freshmen who do not.
2. There is no significant difference between the ACT English scores of freshmen who join fraternities and freshmen who do not.
3. Freshmen who come from high schools with large graduating classes have the same tendency to join fraternities as do freshmen who come from high schools with small graduating classes.
4. Freshmen who live on campus have the same tendency to join fraternities as do freshmen who live off campus.
5. There is no significant difference between the first semester grade-point average of freshmen who joined fraternities and freshmen who did not when the covariate of scholastic ability is controlled.
6. There is no significant difference between the first semester grade-point average of fraternity freshmen who live off campus and fraternity freshmen who live on campus and non-fraternity freshmen who live off campus and non-fraternity freshmen who live on campus when the covariate of scholastic ability is controlled.

7. There is no significant difference in the first semester grade-point average of fraternity freshmen who come from high schools with large graduating classes and fraternity freshmen who come from high schools with small graduating classes and non-fraternity freshmen who come from high schools with large graduating classes and non-fraternity freshmen who come from high schools with small graduating classes when the covariate of scholastic ability is controlled.

8. There is no significant difference between the first-semester English grades earned of freshmen who joined fraternities and freshmen who did not when the covariate of English ability is controlled.

ACADEMIC ABILITY OF  
FRATERNITY AND NON-FRATERNITY FRESHMEN  
AS INDICATED BY ACT SCORES

ACT Composite Scores

Hypothesis One states that there is no significant difference between the ACT composite scores of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. An inspection of Table 2, however, indicates that fraternity freshmen earn a numerically higher mean ACT composite score than do their non-fraternity counterparts. The mean score for the fraternity freshmen is 23.58 while the mean score for non-fraternity freshmen is 21.22; a difference of 2.36. Analysis of variance procedures indicate that this difference between the means will produce an  $F$ -ratio of 24.020. This  $F$ -ratio is shown as the first main effect in Table 3. It was found to be significant at the .01 level.

Since a significant difference between the means was found, Hypothesis One was rejected. On the basis of ACT Composite scores, fraternity freshmen are observed to have a significantly higher academic-ability level than non-fraternity freshmen.

Table 2

Least-Squares Means of ACT Composite Score of 1,643  
 Freshmen Classified According to Fraternity  
 Status, Size of High-School Graduating  
 Class and Place of Residence

Classification	Number	Least-Squares Means	Standard Error
<b>Fraternity Status</b>			
Fraternity	489	23.58	.458
Non-Fraternity	1154	21.22	.244
<b>Size of High-School Class</b>			
Fewer than 25	46	22.78	.989
25 to 99	306	22.45	.317
100 to 399	808	22.19	.203
400 or more	483	22.17	.226
<b>Place of Residence</b>			
On Campus	1051	22.23	.235
Off Campus	592	22.56	.476

Table 3

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance of ACT Composite Scores of  
1,643 Freshmen Classified According to Fraternity Status,  
Size of High-School Class and Place of Residence

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F
1. Fraternity	1	501.595	501.595	24.020**
2. Size of High School Class	3	19.434	6.478	0.310
3. Place of Residence	1	8.699	8.699	0.417
4. Residence X High School Size	3	105.495	35.165	1.684
5. Residence X Fraternity	1	60.222	60.222	2.884
6. High School Size X Fraternity	3	121.190	40.397	1.934
Error	1630	34038.980	20.883	

\*\*Significant at .01 level of confidence



Although no specific hypotheses were formulated concerning freshmen academic-ability levels in relation to the factors of size of high-school graduating class and place of residence, it was considered desirable to include these two potentially significant factors in the analysis of variance computations for the reasons previously stated on page 31. Examination of the data concerning these two factors would appear to support the statement that there is no significant difference between the academic ability levels of freshmen when they are grouped and compared either according to the size of their high-school graduating class or according to their place of residence during the first semester.

In specific, Table 2 indicates only slight differences in numerical means within these two subclasses. Table 3 indicates that the F-ratio for the size of high-school-class factor is 0.310, and the F-ratio for the place-of-residence factor is 0.417. Neither of these F-ratios was found to be statistically significant. Further examination of Table 3 indicates that none of the F-ratios yielded by the interaction effects (items 4, 5 and 6) are statistically significant.

#### ACT English Scores

Hypothesis Two states that there is no significant difference between the ACT English scores of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. An inspection of Table 4, however, indicates that again fraternity freshmen earned a numerically higher mean ACT English score than did non-fraternity freshmen. The mean score for the fraternity freshmen is 20.85 while the mean score for non-fraternity freshmen is 19.11; a difference of 1.74. Analysis of variance procedures indicate that this difference between the means will produce an F-ratio of 14.080.

Table 4

Least-Squares Means of ACT English Score of 1,643  
 Freshmen Classified According to Fraternity  
 Status, Size of High School Graduating  
 Class and Place of Residence

Classification	Number	Least-Squares Means	Standard Error
<b>Fraternity Status</b>			
Fraternity	489	20.85	.441
Non-Fraternity	1154	19.11	.235
<b>Size of High School Class</b>			
Fewer than 25	46	20.175	.952
25 to 99	306	20.154	.306
100 to 399	808	19.888	.196
400 or more	483	19.710	.217
<b>Place of Residence</b>			
On Campus	1051	19.933	.226
Off Campus	592	20.030	.458

This  $\underline{F}$ -ratio is shown as the first main effect in Table 5. It was found to be significant at the .01 level.

Since a significant difference between the means was found, Hypothesis Two was also rejected. On the basis of ACT English scores, fraternity freshmen are observed to have a significantly higher academic-ability level than non-fraternity freshmen.

As was done in the preceding analysis of ACT composite scores, (page 37), a similar analysis of the data was made as it concerned freshmen classified according to their size of high-school graduating class and according to their place of residence. Table 4 indicates only slight differences in numerical means within these two subclasses. Table 5 indicates that the  $\underline{F}$ -ratio for the size of high-school-class factor is 0.517, and the  $\underline{F}$ -ratio for the place-of-residence factor is 0.039. Neither of these  $\underline{F}$ -ratios was found to be statistically significant. Further examination of Table 5 indicates that none of the  $\underline{F}$ -ratios yielded by the interaction effects (items 4, 5 and 6) are statistically significant.

Although no hypotheses were formulated concerning these two additional factors, examination of the data tends to further support the statement that there is no significant difference between the academic-ability levels of freshmen when grouped and compared either according to the size of their high-school graduating class or according to their place of residence during the first semester.

Table 5

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance of ACT English Scores of  
 1,643 Freshmen Classified According to Fraternity Status  
 Size of High-School Class and Place of Residence

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F
1. Fraternity	1	272.598	272.598	14.080**
2. Size of High School	3	30.037	10.012	0.517
3. Place of Residence	1	0.761	0.761	0.039
4. Residence X High School Size	3	61.065	20.355	1.051
5. Residence X Fraternity	1	15.929	15.929	0.823
6. High School Size X Fraternity	3	69.749	23.250	1.201
Error	1630	31557.019	19.360	

\*\*Significant at .01 level of confidence

FRATERNITY AFFILIATION IN RELATION TO  
SIZE OF HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS  
AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

The purpose of this section is to present information concerning the relationship between a freshman's decision to join a fraternity and the size of his high-school graduating class or his place of residence during his first semester of college. Data concerning fraternity status, size of high-school graduating class and place of residence were collected and then compared by Chi-Square analysis. Findings concerning Hypothesis Three, the relationship between fraternity status and size of high-school graduating class, are analyzed and discussed in the first part of this section.

Fraternity Membership and Size of High-School Class

Null Hypothesis Three suggested that the proportion of freshmen who joined fraternities would be the same for each of the four sizes of high-school graduating classes. An inspection of Table 6 indicates that there are numerical differences between the observed and expected frequencies reported in each category.

The collected data (observed frequencies) indicate that 171 freshmen who graduated from high schools with graduating classes of 400 or more actually joined fraternities. On the basis of theoretical probability, however, it would be expected that only 143.8 freshmen from this particular size of high school would join a fraternity. Table 6 indicates these observed and expected frequencies.

Further computations indicate that Chi-square equals 12.189, which is found to be significant at the .05 level. In view of this,

Table 6

Observed and Expected Frequencies by Chi-Square Analysis  
of Fraternity and Non-Fraternity Freshmen Classified  
by Size of High-School Graduating Class

Size of High-School Graduating Class					
	Fewer than 25	25 to 99	100 to 399	400 or more	Total
Fraternity Freshmen					
Observed:	12	93	213	171	489
Expected:	(13.7)	(91.1)	(240.5)	(143.8)	
Non-Fraternity Freshmen					
Observed:	34	213	596	312	1154
Expected:	(32.2)	(214.9)	(567.5)	(339.2)	
Total	46	306	808	483	1643

With d. f. = 4,  $\chi^2 = 12.189$  which is significant at .05 level

there appeared to be sufficient evidence to reject Hypothesis Three.

However, further inspection of Table 6 indicates that the most sizable discrepancies between observed and expected frequencies exist within the "400 or more" column. Previously computed percentages indicate that between 26 and 30 percent of the freshmen from the three smaller classifications of high-school graduating classes actually joined a fraternity while 35 percent of the freshmen who graduated from high schools with graduating classes of 400 or more actually joined a fraternity. In order to further examine this apparent discrepancy an additional chi-square analysis was performed. In this analysis the three smaller classifications were grouped together under a single classification (0 to 399) and were compared with the existing "400 or more" classification. Table 7 was designed to present this analysis.

In this case chi-square equals 10.000 which is found to be significant at the .05 level. On the basis of this analysis and on the analysis previously discussed it was concluded that Hypothesis Three, that freshmen who come from high schools with large graduating classes have the same tendency to join fraternities as do freshmen who come from high schools with small graduating classes, should be rejected. The evidence presented clearly indicates that the freshmen from large high schools were more likely to join a fraternity than the freshmen from small high schools.

#### Fraternity Membership and Place of Residence

Hypothesis Four suggested that the proportion of freshmen who joined fraternities would be the same for both on-campus residents and off-campus residents. Chi-square analysis indicated that Hypothesis Four

Table 7

Observed and Expected Frequencies by Chi-Square Analysis  
of Fraternity and Non-Fraternity Freshmen  
by Two Sizes of High-School Class

	Size of High-School Class		
	0 to 399	400 or more	Total
Fraternity Freshmen			
Observed:	318	171	489
Expected:	(345.2)	(143.8)	
Non-Fraternity			
Observed:	842	312	1154
Expected:	(814.8)	(339.2)	
Total	1160	483	1643

With 1 d.f.,  $\chi^2 = 10.000$ , significant at .05 level  
(-.5 correction for continuity  
computed)



should be rejected. Chi-square equaled 48.088 and was significant at the .01 level. This finding indicates that there is a significant difference between the tendency of off-campus freshmen and on-campus freshmen to join fraternities. The evidence presented indicates that freshmen who live on campus are far more likely to join a fraternity than are freshmen who live off campus. Table 8 was designed to present this analysis.

GRADE-POINT AVERAGE IN RELATION TO FRATERNITY STATUS,  
SIZE OF HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS  
AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

The purpose of this section is to discuss the findings which concern the grade point averages of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen and to examine possible interactions between fraternity status, size of high-school graduating class and place of residence in terms of grade-point average.

Hypotheses Five, Six and Seven were analyzed collectively in one multiple-classification analysis of covariance computation. The independent variables (factors) were: (1) fraternity status, (2) size of high-school graduating class, and (3) place of residence. The dependent variable (criterion variable) was grade-point average and the covariate (control variable) was ACT composite score (academic ability). Initial differences between the independent variables were adjusted by the control variable of academic ability.

Least-squares means of the grade-point averages for each of the independent variables are presented in Table 10. Although each of these hypotheses will be discussed individually, the basic data will be found in these two tables.

Table 8

Observed and Expected Frequencies by Chi-Square Analysis  
of Fraternity and Non-Fraternity Freshmen  
by Place of Residence

	Residence On Campus	Residence Off Campus	Total
Fraternity Freshmen			
Observed:	375	114	489
Expected:	(312.8)	(176.2)	
Non-Fraternity Freshmen			
Observed:	676	478	1154
Expected:	(738.2)	(415.8)	
Total	1051	592	1643

With 1 d.f.,  $\chi^2 = 48.088$ , significant at .01 level  
(-.5 correction for continuity computed)

### Fraternity Status and Grade-Point Average

Hypothesis Five states that there is no significant difference in the first semester grade-point average between fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. Table 9 indicates that the fraternity mean grade-point average is 2.097 and the non-fraternity mean grade-point average is 2.013. Item 1 in Table 10 indicates that the F-ratio in this case is 1.125 which is not statistically significant.

On the basis of this information it would appear that Hypothesis Five should be accepted since on the average there was found to be no significant difference between the fraternity and non-fraternity grade-point averages. However, further examination of Table 10 (Item 5) indicates that there is a significant interaction between the place-of-residence factor and the fraternity-status factor. The F-ratio for this interaction is 8.390 and is found to be significant at the .01 level.

Table 11 was prepared to facilitate further analysis of this interaction. Essentially, what the interaction indicates is that while there is little difference in grade point average between fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen who live on campus, there is considerable difference between the grade point average of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen who live off campus. Non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus earned a significantly lower grade point average when scholastic aptitude was controlled.

On the basis of the cumulative data presented, then, Hypothesis Five was accepted with the understanding that the relative magnitude of any difference between the grade-point average of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen was also dependent on the place-of-residence factor.

Table 9

Least-Squares Means of Grade Point Averages of 1,643  
Freshmen Classified According to Fraternity Status,  
Size of High School Graduating Class and  
Place of Residence

Classification	Number	Least-Squares Mean	Standard Error
<b>Fraternity Status</b>			
Fraternity	489	2.097	0.075
Non-Fraternity	1154	2.013	0.040
<b>Size of High-School Class</b>			
Fewer than 25	46	2.071	0.167
25 to 99	306	2.060	0.052
100 to 399	808	2.057	0.033
400 or more	483	2.031	0.037
<b>Place of Residence</b>			
On Campus	1051	2.107	0.384
Off Campus	592	2.002	0.078

Table 10

Least-Squares Analysis of Covariance of Grade-Point Average  
of 1,643 Freshmen Classified According to Fraternity Status,  
Size of High-School Class and Place of Residence

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F
1. Fraternity	1	0.628	0.628	1.125
2. Size of High School	3	0.211	0.070	0.126
3. Place of Residence	1	0.810	0.810	1.613
4. Residence X High School Size	3	2.344	0.781	1.400
5. Residence X Fraternity	1	4.681	4.681	8.390**
6. High School Size X Fraternity	3	0.410	0.167	0.299
7. Composite ACT as covariate	1	319.307	319.307	572.217**
8. Error	1629	909.011	0.558	

\*\*Significant at .01 level of confidence

Table 11

Least-Squares Means of Grade-Point Average  
of 1,643 Freshmen Classified According to  
Fraternity Status and Place of Residence

	<u>Place of Residence</u>		
	On Campus	Off Campus	Total
Fraternity Freshmen	2.081	2.111	2.097
Non-Fraternity Freshmen	2.132	1.892	2.013
Mean	2.107	2.002	

### Fraternity Status and Place of Residence

Hypothesis Six suggests that there is no significant difference in grade-point average between the two fraternity groups (those who lived on campus and those who lived off campus) and between the two non-fraternity groups divided in a like manner. As was seen in the discussion of Hypothesis Five, the information available would indicate that Hypothesis Six should be rejected. It was previously observed in Table 10 (item 5) that there was a significant interaction between the fraternity-status factor and the place-of-residence factor. This interaction produced an  $F$ -ratio of 8.390 which was significant at the .01 level.

In order to determine the meaning of this interaction, Table 11 was prepared from the data. From an examination of Table 11 it can be seen that there is little difference between the mean grade-point averages of fraternity freshmen who lived on campus (2.081), and fraternity freshmen who lived off campus (2.111). There is, however, a significant difference between the grade-point averages of non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus (2.132) and non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus (1.892).

On the basis of the information presented, Hypothesis Six was rejected. Non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus had a significantly higher grade-point average than non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus when scholastic ability was controlled.

### Fraternity Status and Size of High-School Class

Hypothesis Seven states that there is no significant difference in grade-point averages between the two groups of fraternity freshmen

(those who came from high schools with large graduating classes and those who came from high schools with small graduating classes) and the two groups of non-fraternity freshmen partitioned in a like manner. An examination of Table 10 (item 6) indicates that there is no significant interaction present between the fraternity-status factor and the size-of-high-school-class factor. The  $F$ -ratio for this interaction is 0.299, which is not significant. On the basis of this information, Hypothesis Seven was accepted.

ENGLISH GRADES EARNED IN RELATION TO FRATERNITY STATUS,  
SIZE OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS  
AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

The purpose of this section is to discuss the findings which concern the first-semester English grades of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. The data presented were also examined for possible interactions between fraternity status, size of high-school graduating class and place of residence in terms of first semester English grades.

Hypothesis Eight was examined through a multiple-classification analysis of covariance computation. The independent variables were: (1) fraternity status, (2) size of high-school graduating class, and (3) place of residence. The dependent variable was the first-semester English grade and the covariate was the ACT English score. Initial differences between the independent variables were adjusted by the control variable, ACT English scores.

Least-squares means of the grade-point averages for each of the independent variables are presented in Table 12.  $F$ -ratios for each of the independent variables and their interactions are presented in Table 13.



### English Grades and Fraternity Status

Hypothesis Eight states that there is no significant difference in the first-semester English grades between fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. Table 12 indicates that the fraternity mean English grade is 2.096 and the non-fraternity mean English grade is 1.934. Item 1 in Table 13 indicates that the  $F$ -ratio in this case is 2.276, which is not statistically significant.

On the basis of this information it would appear that Hypothesis Eight should be accepted since on the average there was found to be no significant difference between fraternity and non-fraternity English grades when controlled for initial ability. However, as was the case with grade-point averages, further examination of Table 13 (item 5) indicates that there is a significant interaction between the place-of-residence factor and the fraternity-status factor. The  $F$ -ratio for this interaction is 4.761 and is found to be significant at the .05 level.

Table 14 was prepared to facilitate further analysis of this interaction. Essentially, what the interaction indicates is that while there is little difference in the English grades between fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus, there is considerable difference between the English grades of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus. Non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus earned significantly lower English grades.

On the basis of the cumulative data presented, then, Hypothesis Eight was accepted with the understanding that the relative magnitude of any difference between the English grades of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen was also dependent on the place-of-residence factor.

Table 12

Least-Squares Means of English Grades of 1,499 Freshmen  
 Classified According to Fraternity Status,  
 Size of High-School Graduating Class  
 and Place of Residence

Classification	Number	Least-Squares Mean	Standard Error
Fraternity Status			
Fraternity	450	2.096	0.094
Non-Fraternity	1049	1.934	0.051
Size of High-School Class			
Fewer than 25	45	1.824	0.203
25 to 99	276	2.115	0.066
100 to 399	738	2.056	0.043
400 or more	440	2.067	0.047
Place of Residence			
On Campus	965	2.105	0.047
Off Campus	534	1.926	0.099

Table 13

Least Squares Analysis of Covariance of English Grades of  
1,499 Freshmen Classified According to Fraternity Status,  
Size of High-School Class and Place of Residence

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F
1. Fraternity	1	2.250	2.250	2.276
2. Size of High School	3	1.695	0.565	0.685
3. Place of Residence	1	2.398	2.399	2.906
4. Residence X High-School Size	3	1.368	0.456	0.553
5. Residence X Fraternity	1	3.929	3.929	4.761*
6. High-School Size X Fraternity	3	0.527	0.178	0.213
7. ACT English as Covariate	1	203.210	203.210	246.239**
8. Error	1485	1225.500	0.852	

\*Significant at .05 level of confidence

\*\*Significant at .01 level of confidence

Table 14

Least-Squares Means of English Grades of  
1,499 Freshmen Classified According to  
Fraternity Status and Place of Residence

	<u>Place of Residence</u>		
	On Campus	Off Campus	Total
Fraternity Freshmen	2.120	2.072	2.096
Non-Fraternity Freshmen	2.090	1.780	1.935
Mean	2.105	1.926	

### Additional Observations

Although no additional hypotheses had been formulated concerning either English grades and place of residence or English grades and size of high-school graduating class, the same general pattern that was observed in the analysis of grade-point averages appeared also to obtain for the analysis of English grades. A similar significant interaction between fraternity status and place of residence was observed and the size of a freshman's high school graduating class was found to have no significant relationship to English grades earned. Table 13 indicates these particular main effects (items 2 and 3) and interaction effects (items 4 and 6).

The repetition of this general pattern was predictable when it was observed that both the ACT composite scores (Table 10) and the ACT English scores (Table 13) had a highly significant relationship to their respective measures of achievement. The ACT composite score when computed as a covariate produced an  $F$ -ratio of 572.217. The ACT English score when computed as a covariate resulted in an  $F$ -ratio of 246.239. On the basis of these particular  $F$ -ratios it was found that for each one-point increase in ACT composite score a corresponding increase of .096 could be expected in grade-point average, and for each one-point increase in ACT English score a corresponding increase of .088 could be expected in the English grade.

## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant differences between fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen at Louisiana State University during the fall semester of the 1969-70 academic year in the areas of academic ability, academic achievement, high-school environment and place-of-residence influence on fraternity affiliation. Eight specific questions were formulated to serve as a guide for the study. The answers to these eight questions and a discussion of the way in which they related to the purpose of the study comprise the major portion of the summary section of this chapter. The conclusions drawn from the study are included at the end of the chapter.

### SUMMARY

Social fraternities have been an integral part of Louisiana State University since the late 1800's. In general, they followed a growth and development pattern that was similar to the pattern followed by fraternities on other campuses across the country. However, within the past few years serious questions have been raised as to their value to the college community.

A review of fraternity-related literature published within the past twenty years offered some insight into the problem and presented some interesting statistics but was found to have little to say specifically to the problems of the social fraternities at Louisiana

State University in the year 1970. Because of this void of relevant information and because of the fact that social fraternities are closely mingled with the affairs of the University this study was undertaken. Basically, its purpose was to create a more accurate picture or description of the type of freshmen who joined fraternities. This was to be done by contrasting fraternity freshmen and non-fraternity freshmen in a number of different ways.

### Academic Ability

One question that was of primary interest to this study concerned the academic-ability level or potential for academic achievement of freshmen who chose to join fraternities. Were they superior students? inferior students? or did they possess academic ability levels that were about the same as their non-fraternity counterparts?

On the basis of the data analyzed in this study it was found that in general the freshmen who chose to affiliate with fraternities had higher academic ability than those freshmen who chose not to affiliate. From analysis of both the composite scores and the scores of the English section of the American College Testing Program test it was determined that there was a significant difference between fraternity freshmen and non-fraternity freshmen.

The ACT composite mean was 23.58 for fraternity freshmen and 21.22 for non-fraternity freshmen. This produced an F-ratio of 24.020, which was significant at the .01 level. The ACT English mean was 20.85 for fraternity freshmen and 19.11 for non-fraternity freshmen. This produced an F-ratio of 14.080, which was also significant at the .01 level.

As was indicated in Chapter 3, research in the area of academic ability has been inconclusive. Some researchers have found the academic ability levels of fraternity men higher than the ability levels of non-fraternity men. Other researchers have reported the opposite of this. Previous research, then, would appear to support the contention that the academic ability levels of fraternity and non-fraternity groups vary from campus to campus and possibly from year to year.

At Louisiana State University, however, during the fall semester of 1969, it was found that fraternity freshmen had an academic-ability level that was higher than the non-fraternity freshmen level.

#### Academic Achievement

A second question of interest to this study concerned the achievement levels of freshmen who chose to join fraternities. What happened ~~to~~ freshmen after they joined fraternities? Did they achieve at a higher level than their non-fraternity counterparts? or at a lower level?

On the basis of the data analyzed in this study it was found that in general, fraternity freshmen achieved at about the same level as did non-fraternity freshmen during their first semester of college work. There was no statistically significant difference between the two groups.

After statistically controlling for initial differences in academic ability, it was found that there was no significant difference between the mean grade-point average earned by fraternity freshmen and the mean grade-point average earned by non-fraternity freshmen. However, it was found necessary to qualify this result with the statement that the relative magnitude of any difference between the grade-point averages of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen was dependent to a degree on



the place of residence of the freshmen. The necessity for this qualifying statement was created by a significant interaction which occurred between the fraternity-status factor and the place-of-residence factor. The interaction indicated that non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus earned a significantly lower grade-point average than non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus when scholastic ability was controlled.

An analysis of the English grades earned by freshmen further supported the hypothesis that there was no significant difference between the achievement levels of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen. By using the analysis of covariance technique it was found that there was no significant difference between the mean English grade earned by fraternity freshmen and the mean English grade earned by non-fraternity freshmen during the same, first semester period.

Again, however, it was found necessary to qualify this result with the statement that the relative magnitude of any difference between the mean English grade of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen was dependent to a degree on the place of residence of the freshmen. As was the case with the grade-point-average findings, the necessity for this qualifying statement was created by a significant interaction which occurred between the fraternity-status factor and the place-of-residence factor. The interaction indicated that non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus earned significantly lower English grades than non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus when scholastic ability was controlled.

#### Place of Residence

At Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, first semester

freshmen students have only two options as to where they may live. They may live either in one of the campus dormitories or at home with their parents. There are very few exceptions to this rule.

Of interest to the writer in this section of the study was the contention that fraternities were utilized primarily by campus residents. An analysis of the data supported this contention. Freshmen who lived on campus were more likely to affiliate with fraternities than were their freshmen counterparts who lived off campus. And while possible reasons for this tendency were legion, it was impossible on the basis of the data presented by this study to give statistical documentation to any of them. The study only offered evidence that freshmen who lived off campus were found to be proportionally under-represented in fraternities.

Further analysis of the data presented concerning place of residence indicated that there was no significant difference between the academic ability levels of freshmen who lived on campus and freshmen who lived off campus.

Also, on the basis of the information presented in Tables 10, page 49, and 13, page 55, it seemed possible to draw a similar conclusion concerning the academic-achievement levels of off-campus and on-campus freshmen. That is, no significant difference was found between the achievement levels of freshmen who lived off campus and freshmen who lived on campus. However, additional examination of Tables 10, page 49, and Table 13, page 55, indicated that when these two groups were further partitioned according to fraternity status, significant interactions occurred. Analysis of these interactions, presented in Tables 11, page 50, and 14, page 56, indicated that

non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus achieved at a significantly lower level. From these data, then, it appeared that the place-of-residence factor did have an interaction effect on academic achievement during the first semester of the freshman year.

#### Size of High School Graduating Class

On numerous occasions during the past several years undergraduate fraternity spokesman at Louisiana State University have attempted to establish the idea that one of the major purposes of a fraternity was to take men from all types of backgrounds and create a bond of understanding among them. The purpose of a part of this study was to determine the accuracy of that assertion in so far as high-school environment was concerned.

The data analyzed concerning high-school background did not support the idea that fraternities drew their members in proportional numbers from all types of high schools. On the basis of the size of a freshman's high-school graduating class it was found that freshmen who come from high schools with large graduating classes were more likely to join fraternities than were freshmen who came from high schools with smaller graduating classes.

As was true with the place-of-residence factor previously mentioned, on the basis of the data analyzed by this study it was impossible to document any of the reasons why freshmen from larger high schools were more likely to join fraternities. Only the fact that there was a difference could be supported by the evidence presented.

It was further noted from the data that the size of the high-school graduating class had no significant relationship with either academic ability or academic achievement. No significant differences

were found between the ACT scores of the freshmen who came from high schools of different sizes. Nor was any significant difference found between the grade-point averages of freshmen who came from high schools of different sizes.

### CONCLUSIONS

From a consideration of the data presented and with the understanding that the data were based on freshmen male students at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge during the fall semester of the 1969-70 academic year, the following conclusions appear to be warranted:

1. There was a significant difference between the academic-ability levels of fraternity freshmen and non-fraternity freshmen. Fraternity freshmen had significantly higher ACT composite scores and significantly higher scores on the English portion of the ACT test.

2. There was no significant difference between the academic-ability levels of freshmen who graduated from high schools with large graduating classes and freshmen who graduated from high schools with small graduating classes.

3. There was no significant difference between the academic-ability levels of freshmen who lived on the campus during the first semester and freshmen who lived off campus during the first semester.

4. On the average there was no significant difference between the first semester, academic achievement levels of fraternity freshmen and non-fraternity freshmen. After controlling for differences in ability levels, no significant differences were found in either grade-point averages for the first semester or in English grades earned during

the first semester. However, when fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen were further partitioned according to place of residence, a significant interaction occurred. Non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus were found to achieve at a significantly lower level than non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus. In view of this interaction, it was found necessary to qualify this particular conclusion with the statement that the relative magnitude of any difference between the achievement levels of fraternity and non-fraternity freshmen was also dependent upon the place-of-residence factor.

5. There was no significant difference between the first-semester achievement levels of freshmen students who graduated from high schools with large graduating classes and freshmen students who graduated from high schools with small graduating classes. No significant differences were found in either grade-point averages for the first semester or in English grades earned during the first semester.

6. On the average there was no significant difference between the first semester, academic-achievement levels of freshmen who lived off campus and freshmen who lived on campus. No significant differences were found in either grade point averages for the first semester or in English grades earned during the first semester. However, when off-campus freshmen and on-campus freshmen were further partitioned according to fraternity status, a significant interaction occurred. Non-fraternity freshmen who lived off campus were found to achieve at a significantly lower level than non-fraternity freshmen who lived on campus. In view of this interaction, it was found necessary to qualify this particular conclusion with the statement that the relative magnitude of any difference between the achievement levels of off-campus and on-campus

freshmen was also dependent upon the fraternity status factor.

7. Freshmen who graduated from high schools with large graduating classes were more likely to join fraternities than were students who graduated from high schools with smaller graduating classes.

8. Freshmen who lived on campus were more likely to join fraternities than were freshmen who lived off campus. Freshmen who lived off campus were found to be under-represented in fraternities.

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## APPENDIX A

## Information Card Layout

<u>Columns</u>	<u>Information</u>
1	Fraternity Status 1 = Non-fraternity 2 = Fraternity
2	Place of Residence 1 = On Campus 2 = Off Campus
3	English Grade 0 = F, 1 = D, 2 = C, 3 = B, 4 = A
4	High School Class 1 = Fewer than 25 2 = 25 to 99 3 = 100 to 399 4 = 400 or more
5-6	Fraternity Name by Code (see Appendix B)
7-31	Student Name
32-40	Social Security Number
41-42	ACT Composite Score (1 through 36)
43-44	ACT English Score (1 through 36)
45-48	Grade Point Average
49	Date of Entry

## APPENDIX B

## Fraternity Codes

01	Acacia
02	Alpha Epsilon Pi
03	Alpha Tau Omega
04	Delta Kappa Epsilon
05	Delta Tau Delta
06	Kappa Alpha
07	Kappa Sigma
08	Lambda Chi Alpha
09	Phi Delta Theta
10	Phi Gamma Delta
11	Phi Kappa Theta
12	Phi Kappa Psi
13	Pi Kappa Alpha
14	Sigma Alpha Epsilon
15	Sigma Chi
16	Sigma Phi Epsilon
17	Sigma Nu
18	Sigma Pi
19	Tau Kappa Epsilon
20	Theta Xi
21	Zeta Beta Tau
22	Unhoused:
	Alpha Gamma Rho
	Delta Sigma Phi
	Phi Iota Alpha
	Pi Kappa Phi

### VITA

James Jackson Brasher was born in Teaneck, New Jersey, on May 29, 1930.

He was educated in numerous elementary schools in and around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After graduating from Phoenixville High School, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, he attended Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky for two years. He then transferred to The Pennsylvania State University where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1953.

After a two-year tour of duty with the United States Air Force he enrolled in Louisiana State University where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1956 and a Master of Education degree in 1957. In 1959, after teaching at Central High School in East Baton Rouge Parish, he returned to Louisiana State University as a counselor in the Junior Division. In 1961 he was appointed to the position of Assistant to the Dean of Men. He has remained with this office for the past nine years and now holds the position of Associate Dean of Men.

He is married to Barbara Watkins Brasher and has three daughters; Cheryl Joy, Tracy Lee, and Holly.

## EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: James Jackson Brasher

Major Field: Education

Title of Thesis: A Study Comparing Fraternity and Non-Fraternity Freshmen At Louisiana State University

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January 4, 1971